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CHANGES IN SELF-PERCEPTION AS AN OUTCOME OF HUMAN
RELATIONS TRAINING IN COUNSELOR EDUCATION STUDENTS

BY



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A THESIS

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The undersigned certify that they have read,
and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for
acceptance, a thesis entitled "Changes in Self-
Perception as an Outcome of Human Relations Training
in Counselor Education Students" submitted by Marvin
James Westwood in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Education.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between Human Relations Training and Self-Exploration over a number of sessions. For this study it was decided to choose a sample of graduate students enrolled in the Counselor Education Program at the University of Alberta which were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups. The Group Semantic Differential, administered prior to and following experimental treatment, was chosen to test changes of self-perception brought about by Human Relations Training. A measure of mean performance level of Self-Exploration for the experimental groups was administered to each session over the total treatment period.

When the data, collected from pre- and post-tests were analysed it was found that the results did not support the first hypothesis. It was therefore concluded that Human Relations Training ^{does} not effect changes in the self-perception of the group member. The results of the analysis of Self-Exploration did support the second hypothesis and it was concluded that trend of mean performance levels of Self-Exploration for Human Relations Training groups are non-linear in trend.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Research on the effectiveness of counselor education programs has suggested the importance of some kind of therapeutic experience for effective training in psychotherapy and counseling (Baldwin and Lee, 1965; Truax, 1967). Many graduate programs attempt to provide this experience in a group setting known variously as Human Relations Training, T-Group, Basic Encounter Group or Quasi-Group Therapy. This small group activity has emerged as an integral part of many present-day counselor training programs.

A common goal of such groups seems to be to provide the counselor trainee with an opportunity for self-exploration: to examine his goals, values, and attitudes in relation to his emerging role as counselor or therapist. Such group experience is designed to integrate and develop the affective as well as the intellectual aspects of the individual's personality. An outcome of exploration of self by group members appears to include several perceptual and attitude changes within the individual (Burke and Bennis, 1961). Such changes in perception of self are significant variables of study not only owing to their intrinsic psychological interest, but also because they so often seem concomitant for more

overt behavioral changes.

Investigation of the self-perception variable is important both for understanding the perceptual process generally and, more particularly for evaluating the efficacy with which human relations training meets its stated goals (Burke and Bennis, 1961).

Truax (1967) stressed the importance of encounter group activity to counselor training:

The beginning trainee, like the majority of human beings in our culture, has not developed high levels of skill in adequately expressing his own feelings. One of the values of quasi-group therapy experience is to develop some beginning skill in self-exploration; a skill in accurately perceiving and communicating inner feelings (p. 275).

According to Truax's model of 'elements of effective encounters' (Truax, 1967, p. 1), self-exploration is one of four antecedent conditions or 'effective therapeutic ingredients' necessary in a relationship (group or individual) for constructive personality change.

While Truax (1967) underscores significance of the process variable -- self-exploration -- Burke and Bennis (1961) view the outcome variable -- self-perception -- as a significant construct in terms of the goals and processes of the group. Burke and Bennis contend that one goal appears to be desired by all trainers, regardless of orientation: perceptual clarity -- in terms of how the individual perceives himself (self-percept).

Research indicates that individuals within a group setting expressing high levels of self-exploration showed greater personality change than those who were relatively low in degree of self-exploration (Truax and Wargo, 1966b; Truax, Wargo, and Carkhuff, 1966; Truax, 1967; Berzon, 1965). Truax (1966a) further stated that the antecedent conditions of accurate empathy, unconditional positive regard and genuineness are differential reinforcers that are contingent upon the fourth therapeutic ingredient -- self-exploration -- and thereby enhance positive personality and behavior change.

By underscoring the provision of opportunities for self-exploration through HRT, Lister (1964) and McKinnon (1967) contend that member self-exploration is the necessary process of affective learning which is an important factor contributing to change in perception of self.

In reference to behavior change as an outcome of the small group approach, Benne, Bradford, and Lippit (1967) remark:

... much individual learning about self may occur as a result of the multi-faceted responses from a variety of other group members (p. 25)
... the evidence that learning has taken place lies in testable changes in the behavior of the learner (p. 24).

Thus, attention to perceptual changes about self as an observable outcome of Human Relations Training, is of

apparent value, in that counselor educators (Rogers, 1962, 1969; Tyler, 1961; Wrenn, 1962, and Truax, 1967) have emphasized the importance of counselor self-perception development as an essential ingredient of counselor education programs.

THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study was to investigate the level of self-exploration behavior and change in perception of self as it relates to human relations training among graduate students.

Specifically the problem is twofold:

(a) To determine whether individuals who complete a human relations training course display a greater amount of change in self-perception than individuals in a non-treatment group.

(b) To investigate to what extent and at what depth members of a human relations training course engage in self-exploration.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Self-Exploration (SE) refers to active exploration by an individual of his feelings, his values, his perception

of others, his relationships, his fears, his turmoils and life choices (Truax and Carkhuff, 1964). Exploration of self includes both conscious aspects of the self, or in more operational language, material readily available to awareness, and material not currently focused upon by awareness (Truax, 1964). In the terminology of psychoanalytic theory, this process of SE is described as the patient's becoming aware of and exploring unconscious material upon perception of reality (Munroe, 1955; Truax, 1967). Berzon (1965) described SE as behavior which characteristically is personally relevant material, that is, self-expressions which elaborate and deepen the image of the individual in the group in a way that fails to occur when the individual impersonally discusses subject matter external to himself and the group. Personally relevant material refers to material which is of particular significance to the self. This would include: (a) Self descriptions that are intended to reveal the self to the group, for example, "I can't stand it when people move close to me." (b) Communications of personal values that disclose one's personal value system, for example, "I think most Jews are dishonest." (c) Expressed perceptions of one's emotional relationship to others, for example, "I find it difficult to show affection to you when these people are here."

Human Relations Training (HRT) has been variously labeled T-Group, Laboratory Group (Bradford et al, 1964) Sensitivity Training, Basic Encounter Group (Rogers, 1967) Human Potential Movement (Howard, 1968), and Quasi-Group Therapy (Truax, 1967). Essentially, HRT is involvement by members, usually nine to twelve, whose aim it is to focus on personal interaction (Rogers, 1961). Members tend to increase personal expressiveness and self understanding as defenses are lowered in an environment relatively free of imposed structure (Rogers, 1969).

Essentially the group activity provides a laboratory for experimental learning behavior (Benne, Bradford, and Lippit, 1967). A variety of specific activities, exercises, materials or components, of which sensitivity training is only one, comprise the group approach. The components which are chosen and the time allotted to each of them will vary, depending upon the specific learning goals, the leaders and the participants of the particular group.

In addition to the above mentioned aspects of HRT, the term HRT, as used in this study, refers to an educational strategy which attempts to create a situation in which the members, through their own leadership and acquired interpersonal communication skills, can evaluate their old attitudes and behavior patterns and explore new ones (Batchelder and Hardy, 1968). This training provides a temporary artificial supportive culture in which it is safe

for a member to evaluate his behavior in light of the responses that the group elicits from himself and others.

Self-Percept (SP) as it relates to the present study refers to the individual's self-structure, defined by Rogers (1951) as an organized fluid but consistent, conceptual pattern of the characteristics of the 'I' or 'me' which are admissible into awareness, together with the values attached to those concepts.

Self-Percept can be operationally explained by the instrument -- Group Semantic Differential -- used to measure the construct. In the present study Self-Percept is defined according to an individual's rating on several bipolar adjectival rating scales for the concept: "The Way I See Myself". Noting the distinction between 'actual' and 'ideal' self-percept (Rogers, 1951 and Stock, 1964) the above concept -- "The Way I See Myself" -- refers to an individual's perception of 'actual self'.

ORGANIZATION OF THESIS

The remainder of the thesis is organized as follows: Chapter II presents a review of the related research on Human Relations Training, Self-Exploration, and Self-Percept. Chapter III deals with the method and procedure of the study. Chapter IV includes a report of the data and the

statistical analysis of the data. Chapter V presents the findings, the conclusions drawn, the inferences and the implications made on the basis of the analysis of data.

CHAPTER II

RELATED LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FORMULATIONS

HUMAN RELATIONS TRAINING (HRT) AND GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY

Some Distinctions

The bulk of the work in the area of Self-Exploration and Perception of Self has focused on psychotherapy groups and individual counseling situations (Truax and Wargo, 1966b; Truax et al, 1966; Truax, 1967, Berzon et al, 1965; Solomon et al, 1965; and Berzon, 1965).

Recently such research has moved in the direction of HRT groups. It is important that the human relations training group be differentiated from group psychotherapy.

As Shostrom (1967) indicated, HRT is intended for normal people (students, business men, educators, and so forth) who are striving to develop and expand their human potentialities. Group psychotherapy, on the other hand, is concerned with helping a troubled person gain relief from inner conflicts and anxieties. Therapy as defined in the traditional sense, is concerned with an understanding of the patients' past in order to foster understanding in the present situation, but HRT is involved in assisting the group member's here-and-now experiencing of himself and his interpersonal values. HRT groups concern themselves

with the re-evaluation of the members' loosely formulated interpersonal value orientations (assumptions about self and others, and so on) which enables the participants to commit themselves to actualizing interpersonal values.

Bradford, Gibb and Benne (1964) concur with Shostrom's aforementioned distinctions when they suggest that although there are many obvious similarities between the HRT and therapy groups -- HRT differs in a number of important ways. According to Bradford et al (1964) HRT:

... tends to utilize data about present behavior and its consequences rather than delving into genetic causes. It tends to deal with conscious and preconscious behavior rather than with unconscious motivation. The T-Group makes the important assumption that persons participating are well rather than ill (p. 2).

There are however sufficient similarities between psychotherapy and HRT (Frank, 1967; Lakin and Carson, 1966; Luft, 1963; Truax, 1967; and Bradford et al, 1967; Miles, 1960; and Martin, 1968); to suggest that much of the research in psychotherapy would apply as well to the area of HRT.

CENTRAL THERAPEUTIC INGREDIENTS: THEORETIC

CONVERGENCE AND RESEARCH EVIDENCE

Background

A primary objective of the present study, investi-

gation of Self-Exploration as a process variable of HRT, has grown out of programs of research into the processes of individual and group counseling and psychotherapy. Such inquiry appears to have identified at least four critical process variables in effective therapeutic processes (Rogers, 1957; Truax, 1961 and 1967).

The central therapeutic ingredients are:

- (1) accurate empathy,
- (2) unconditional positive regard,
- (3) self-congruence,
- (4) self-exploration.

More specifically, it was hypothesized and found that conditions one, two, and three were the necessary antecedent conditions for increased self-exploration, condition four (Truax, 1967, p. 192). Further evidence has been presented which indicates a positive relationship between amount of self-exploration and positive personality change (Steele, 1948; Wolfson, 1949; Seeman, 1949; Blau, 1953; Braaten, 1948; Truax, 1962(j) and 1966(d), 1965 and 1966(b)).

In order to investigate the relationship between self-exploration and Human Relations Training it is necessary to consider Truax's theoretical explanation of the association between antecedent conditions and the fourth therapeutic ingredient: active self-exploration.

Definitions

Definition of the three antecedent conditions is necessary in order to explain the hypothesized relationship between the antecedent conditions, self-exploration and constructive personality change. The antecedent conditions are operationally defined (in terms of the counselor-client relationship) in order to bridge the gap between the term and the behavior or experience to which the word refers (Ragoport, 1953).

(1) Self-congruence is synonymously termed genuineness. Truax (1967) defined self-congruence as "most basically a direct personal encounter, a meeting on a person-to-person basis without defensiveness or retreat into facades or roles, and so in a sense an openness to experience (p. 32)."

In terms of more operational language, an individual is self-congruent when he is perceived by others as 'being himself', which implies that an individual is really whatever his response denotes. It does not mean that a group member must disclose his total self, but only that whatever he does show is a real aspect of himself, not a response growing out of defensiveness or a merely 'professional' response that has been learned and repeated (Truax, 1967).

To define self-congruence in terms of the Five-Point Scale which was developed to measure the construct, a very low level (scale value = 1) exists when:

... the therapist is clearly defensive in the interaction, and there is explicit evidence of a very considerable discrepancy between what he says and what he experiences. There may be striking contradictions in the therapist's statements, the content of his verbalization may contradict the voice qualities or nonverbal cues (i.e., the upset therapist stating in a strained voice that he is "not bothered at all" by the patient's anger (Truax, 1967, p. 69).

A high level of self-congruence (scale value = 5) exists when:

The therapist is freely and deeply himself in the relationship. He is open to experiences and feelings of all types -- both pleasant and hurtful -- without traces of defensiveness or retreat into professionalism. At stage five the therapist need not express personal feelings, but whether he is giving advice, reflecting, interpreting, or sharing experiences, it is clear that he is being very much himself, so that his verbalizations match his inner experiences (Truax, 1967, p. 72).

(2) Unconditional positive regard involves valuing another individual as a person, separate from any evaluation of his behavior or thoughts -- accepting of another for himself regardless of his behavior (Truax, 1967).

In terms of the five-point scale a very low level (scale value = 1) of unconditional positive regard exists when:

The therapist is actively offering advice or giving clear negative regard. He may be telling the patient what would be "best for him," or in other ways actively approving or disapproving of his behavior. The therapist's actions make himself the locus of evaluation; he sees himself as 'responsible for' the patient (Truax, 1967, p. 60).

A high level of unconditional positive regard (scale value = 5) is manifest when:

There is a deep respect for the patient's worth as a person and his rights as a free individual. At this level the patient is free to be himself even if this means that he is regressing, being defensive, or even disliking or rejecting the therapist himself. At this stage the therapist cares deeply for the patient as a person, but it does not matter to him how the patient chooses to behave (Truax, 1967, p. 67).

(3) Accurate empathy involves more than just the ability of the counselor to perceive the client's 'private world' as if it were his own. It also involves more than just his ability to know what the client means. Accurate empathy involves both the therapist's sensitivity to current feelings and his verbal facility to communicate this understanding in a language attuned to the client's current feelings (Truax, 1967).

In terms of the nine-point scale a very low level of accurate empathy (scale value =1) is manifest when:

The therapist seems completely unaware of even the most conspicuous of the client's feelings; his responses are not appropriate to the mood and content of the client's statements. There is no determinable quality of empathy, and hence no accuracy whatsoever. The therapist may be bored and disinterested or actively offering advice, but he is not communicating an awareness of the client's current feelings (Truax, 1967, p. 47).

A high level of accurate empathy (scale value = 9) is operationally defined in the following manner:

The therapist in this stage unerringly responds to the client's full range of feelings in their exact intensity. Without hesitation, he recognizes each emotional nuance and communicates an understanding of every deepest feeling. He is completely attuned to the client's feelings and reflects them in his words and voice. With sensitive accuracy, he expands the client's hints into a full-scale (though tentative) elaboration of feeling or experience. He shows precision both in understanding and in communication of this understanding, and expresses and experiences them without hesitancy (Truax, 1967, p. 56).

The three conditions -- accurate empathy, self-congruence, and unconditional positive regard appear to be recurring themes in many of the theoretical formulations designed to describe effective psychotherapy. Psychoanalytic theorists such as Alexander (1948), Halpern and Lesser (1960), Ferenczi (1930), Fenichel (1945), Fliess (1942), Fromm Reichman (1952), Sullivan (1940); client-centered theorists such as Dymond (1949), Jourard (1959), Rogers (1951), and Truax (1961a and 1966) as well as more eclectic theorists such as, Fox and Goldin (1964), Hobbs (1962), Raush and Bordin (1957), Strunk (1958), Strupp (1960), and Truax and Carkhuff (1963); and the behavioristic theorists such as, Wolpe (1958) stressed the importance of the therapist's ability to: (a) sensitively and accurately understand the client and accurately and empathically know the client's 'inner world' and respond in such a manner as to communicate this deep understanding; (b) communicate a non-possessive warmth and acceptance of the client; and

(c) communicate his own genuineness, authenticity, or integration within the therapeutic encounter.

Measurement

Truax (1961 and 1962) developed scales to measure the four central therapeutic ingredients; they were heavily rater-bound and designed primarily for use with live observation or tape recordings (Truax, 1961, 1962a and 1962b). Later research suggested the above mentioned scales, as well as additional instruments based on the earlier developed scales (Rablen et al, 1960; Barret-Lennard, 1972; and Rogers, 1957) could validly measure inter/intra personal interaction among individuals of a group, as such interaction can be conceptually abstracted, and hence measured as group characteristics (Truax, 1961). The scales are still in the developmental stage as they are highly inferential and crude in construction, however, as Truax (1967) suggests: "they represent a beginning attempt to specify operation meaning of the concepts (p. 43)."

SELF-EXPLORATION AND CONSTRUCTIVE PERSONALITY CHANGE

Self-Exploration: A Dependent Variable

Level of SE seems to be a function of the three

antecedent conditions: accurate empathy, unconditional positive regard, and self-congruence. Attempting to clarify the relations between the antecedent conditions and member level of SE, Truax (1961a) designed a study with hospital patients using therapy groups. The findings of the above mentioned study revealed that all three central therapeutic ingredients (antecedent conditions) were significantly related to level SE.

Self-Exploration: An Independent Variable

In the literature on both SE and constructive personality change, frequent mention is made suggesting a possible relationship between these two concepts.

Truax and Wargo (1966c), for example, working with hospital patients, in a study of SE found significant evidence that patients with high levels of SE showed greater improvement on outcome measures, that is, MMPI, and Q-Sort, than patients with low levels of SE. Peres (1947) has shown that SE is a sufficient condition for constructive personality change.

SE, as a significant variable of personality change, was explored by Wagstaff, Rice, and Butler (1960) who reported data from a study of client-centered counseling, indicating that clients with successful outcomes tended to explore themselves more in the course of counseling, than less successful clients.

Additional research relating amount of SE and personality change is presented (Steele, 1948; Wolfson, 1949; Seeman, 1949c; Blau, 1953).

Self-Exploration: A Session-by-Session Measure

Information about the relationship between the variable SE and HRT can be obtained by examining session-by-session level of the construct and representation of this information in graphical form.

Wallen (1969) has advanced a theory explaining the process development of HRT by describing the relationship among risk taking of personally relevant material, trust formation, and level of inter-personal communication. It is Wallen's position that when plotting the level of personally relevant material expressed over the total number of sessions a group meets, the variable would tend to increase, then drop in a repeated manner. Level of expressed personally relevant material is a function of level of group trust and interpersonal communication; that is, as trust level increases, risk taking becomes greater and group interpersonal communication level is higher. The relationship is not cyclic: however, as Wallen explains, a point in the process of group development is reached when the risk of expressing personally relevant material becomes too high -- hence ceases. As a result the opposite process occurs, namely, trust level decreases, interpersonal communication is reduced and level of personally relevant

data drops. The process of trust formation and risk taking must then be initiated once again by a group confrontation. Thus a ceiling effect appears to account for this 'rise-fall-rise-fall' level of personally relevant material.

Bennis and Shepard (1965), in advancing a theory of group development indicate a similar trend for level of 'personal intimacy' manifest by the group.

In a study of 'self-directed' groups for vocational rehabilitation clients, Solomon, Berzon, and Weedman (1965) evaluated level of SE over a total of 18 sessions. The findings disclosed a significant increase in level of SE, from sessions 1 to 9 and a similar increase from 10 to 18.

In another study Berzon, Solomon, and Davis (1966) revealed similar findings of the above mentioned study, in investigation of effect of program materials on 'self-directed' groups for individuals seeking vocational improvement. The findings showed an increase in level of SE over sessions 1 to 5 and 6 to 9 of a nine week period.

Investigation of the above studies suggest increase of level of SE over time, a plateau or leveling phase, then a decrease to be followed by a second curve appearing similar to the first.

Perception of Self: An Outcome Measure

Truax and Carkhuff (1966) in employing specific measures to determine self-percept change, have shown

significant differences favoring better outcome with high rather than low levels of SE using Q-Sort measures for assessing change in perception of self. In a study of quasi-group therapy design, rather than psychotherapy, Truax and Wargo (1966a) have shown, that looking at individual measures of outcome, it was found that significant differences favoring high rather than low levels of SE occurred on seven of the twenty-four measures. Three of the measures indicating significant change were Q-Sort of self-concept adjustment, Q-Sort for adequacy of self-concept and the MMPI.

Thus, much of the research cited suggests a significant relationship between SE, a process variable of HRT, and change in perception of self.

THEORY AND RESEARCH SUGGESTING A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HUMAN RELATIONS TRAINING AND PERCEPTION OF SELF

Rationale

The position that Human Relations Training as a laboratory for increased learning about self is well expressed by Benne, Bradford, and Lippit (1967) when they state that "much individual learning about self occurs as a result of the multi-faceted responses from a variety of other group members (p. 25)."

The rationale developed for suggesting a relationship between self-learnings and HRT is presented in terms of learning theory advanced by the above mentioned authors.

The relationship between HRT and Perception of Self is drawn from the hypothesis that Self-understanding and learnings about self can be learned validly only through participation in which the learner (member) is involved, and that change in perception of self is a function of learning about self and learning from this view point refers to the process by which such learnings acquire these informations and skills.

Learner involvement, according to Benne et al,

... requires the establishment of a process of inquiry in which data about member behaviors are collected and analyzed simultaneously with the experience which generates the behaviors. Learnings thus achieved are tested and generalized for continuing use. Each individual may learn about his own motives, feelings, and strategics in dealing with other persons (p. 2).

Learning about self is described as a process variable common to psychotherapy and HRT groups. Some of the theoretical formulations about effective ways of inducing behavioral change in psychiatric or counseling situations have been incorporated into HRT. Such incorporation is due to a recognition that the effective learning that goes on in a counseling process is 'relearning'. Past learnings are dynamically active in the present learning situation. Benne et al state, "this (past learning) is nowhere more evident than when subject matter of

learning is the behavior of self (p. 26)." Past learnings tend to shape the stimuli which the behavior of another person presents to the learner in such a way as to serve his self-maintenance need (Benne et al, 1967).

Counselors, psychotherapists and group leaders attempt to clarify the meaning of the distortions, resulting from past learning influencing one's perception of others intentions and behavior, as an important avenue for changes in the perception of self, and changes in the perception of other group members.

Also, past learnings tend to function as resistance to change, consequently counselors, psychotherapists, and group trainers tend to encourage members to recognize these important gateways to self-understanding.

This emphasis upon distortion of perception and resistance to influence are also incorporated into the HRT methods of learning. Thus the group trainers encourage members to reflect upon their resistance to influence and distortions of perception as a way to understand the need, feelings, and values which characterize the self (Benne et al, 1967).

Identifying and incorporating such learning processes into HRT increases the probability of greater self-understanding, hence as Benne et al, (1967) underscore, the "understanding of self is a goal of learning and necessary precursor to valid confrontation of social realities (p. 26)."

When Benne et al, (1967) refer to the relationship between member (learner) and trainer (helper) as well as member and member of the group, they indicate that the quality of the relationship(s) functions as a condition of communications and revelation of self which processes of learning require -- both in the counseling situation and the training group environment. As a result, the relationships with those members, whose relearning group leaders are trying to facilitate are very important; that is, the group climate seems to be functional in the process of relearning about self for HRT members.

Conditions of the relationship and extent of self-learnings, as proposed by Benner et al, (1967) appear to receive both theoretical as well as empirical support from the work of C.B. Truax in this area.

The antecedent conditions identified by Truax (presented earlier in the present chapter) as characteristic of the 'therapeutic relationship' would appear to be suggesting the same or similar qualities of the relationship held by Benne et al, as necessary conditions for the process of effective learning about self. Although Benne et al, (1967) are less specific and lack definition of the variables of the relationship, compared with the operational definitions of Truax (1967), Benne et al stress the "qualities of the relationship" are necessary conditions for group interaction at a level which leads to increased perceptions

of self.

Several studies in the literature support a possible relationship between HRT and Perception of Self.

Suggesting that Self-Perception is a measurable outcome variable of HRT, Benne et al, (1967) emphasize that one of the objectives of HRT is increased self-understanding and perception.

Burke and Bennis (1961) studied the impact of HRT by measuring changes in the perception of self and other group members. It was found that perception of self did change as assessed on a form of the GSD. Dorothy Stock (1958) found significant changes in the self-percepts of training group members, using Q-Sort measures. Schein and Bennis (1965) and Miles (1965) found similar results with self-perception change as an outcome of HRT.

Bradford et al (1967), contend that all of the following have been shown to be influenced by HRT; various perceptions of self, congruity between self-percept and ideal self and self-insight.

GROUP SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL (GSD) A MEASURE OF SELF-PERCEPTION

Background

Self-Perception is defined, in the present study,

according to an individual's rating on several semantic differential scales for the concept: "The Way I See Myself".

Osgood (1967) explained the construct of 'self' in terms of the theory of semantic meaning by indicating that:

The significance of meaning as a critical variable in personality is most apparent perhaps in the process of therapy itself, where the principal changes that occur appear to be the meanings that various persons, events, and situations have for the patient, and changes in the interrelationships between these significances. The self-concept is one of the more important concepts here (p. 220).

In focusing on the sensitivity of the instrument to assess change, Osgood (1957) pointed out that "the changes that take place during therapy, then should be reflected by changes in the clients meanings of such relevant concepts as myself (p. 220)."

The semantic differential represents a simple means of assessment of Self-Perception. Any instrument utilizing the differential is extremely flexible in the sense that it is simple to modify and to construct for a variety of testing situations (Osgood et al, 1957). The concepts to be measured are specifically undefined. The term 'concept' is used by Osgood in a very general sense to refer to the 'stimulus' to which the subjects' checking operation is a terminal response, that is, "The Way I See myself".

Semantic space is described by Osgood in terms of three main factors on the basis of extensive factor analytic

investigation (Osgood, 1957, pp. 31-75). There are three factors: evaluative, potency, and activity. Several scales of each of the factors made up the instrument, for example:

Evaluative: unfriendly - friendly

Potency: shallow - deep

Activity: quiet - talkative

Studies indicate that the semantic differential has frequently been used as a reliable measure of change in self-perception. Burke and Bennis (1961) employed the GSD as an index of perception (self) change with HRT groups. Huff (1966) employed the semantic differential to measure change in self-rating as an index of therapeutic improvement. Hart (1967) used the differential which provided results that lend support to assumptions about self-concept in theories of Rogers and Super. Schuk (1967) found the semantic differential to be a reliable measure of the concept 'myself' in a study of college seniors, involved in a study of group process. Harmatz (1967) used the semantic differential along with Q-Sort measures to assess personality change as a function of verbal conditioning.

More recently, the semantic differential (Group Form) has been given as an outcome measure of 'self' with groups of specific HRT design (Benne and Burke, 1961; Aiken, 1965; Berzon, 1965; and Martin, 1968).

Truax (1969) indicated, in reference to the GSD, that

there is apparent value in employing the semantic differential as a measure of self-percept in the present study, provided that an evaluation of the instrument is possible in order to determine the precision of the GSD to assess the attribute for which it was designed.¹

¹C.B. Truax, personal communication, June 3, 1969.

CHAPTER III

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

SAMPLE

Description

The subjects in this study were thirty-five male and fourteen female graduate students specializing in the area of counseling psychology at the University of Alberta. All of the students were enrolled in the course, Educational Psychology 517, during the winter session of 1968-69.

Educational Psychology 517, was a graduate group seminar in HRT conducted by three faculty members. The various aspects of the graduate group seminar involve theory sessions pertinent to objectives, processes, and outcomes of HRT, laboratory sessions in which group members participate in exercises, and other group activities with the emphasis on development of improved interpersonal skills. The seminar was a three-credit course offered Term I and II.

The subjects, a unique small universe, were randomly assigned but proportionately representative on the variable of sex to the experimental and control groups. Randomness here is for equating experimental and control groups (internal validity) and is not representativeness of some large population.

Since all subjects were registered in Educational Psychology 517, those scheduled to take the course during the second term composed the control group.

TESTING INSTRUMENTS

Self-Exploration Sub-Scale

The Self-Exploration Sub-Scale is a sub-test of the Scale for the Evaluation of Therapeutic Climate in Small Groups (ETC) developed by Berzon (1965). (Appendix A). The SE Sub-Scale is a process measure designed to evaluate to what extent and at what depth members of a group engage in self-exploration.

The SE Sub-Scale is based on the theoretical formulation of Rogers (1957) in which he postulates the necessary and sufficient conditions for therapeutic personality change. Construction of the above mentioned scale incorporated revisions and additions of the Rogers and Rablen Scale of Process in Psychotherapy (1958) and involve the subsequent work of Rogers' associates with individual elements of the original Process Scale (Gendlin and Geist, 1962; Van der Veen and Tomlinson, 1962).

Additional ideas for selection of criteria and content for the Berzon SE Sub-Scale came from the work of Truax (1961, 1962a,b,c, and d). The original Truax (DX)

Scale for measurement of intrapersonal exploration was revised by Berzon (1965) in order that the entire membership of a small group become the referent being evaluated instead of the one-to-one counselor-client relationship.

Self-exploration is assessed by measuring the amount of 'personally relevant' material being discussed and by the way in which it is being discussed. The SE Sub-Scale describes six stages of SE, ranging from 0 (no demonstrable self-exploration) to 5 (a very high degree of self-probing and exploration).

Scoring Procedures

Three judges, doctoral students in counseling psychology, were trained according to the definitions and criteria for each of the six stages of 'personally relevant material' by means of the ETC Self-Training manual. The judges rated independently four-minute verbatim transcripts of group interaction according to the SE Sub-Scale.

Following rater training on the self-tests and the thirteen expert rated practice samples of the ETC Training Manual, the judges obtained a percentage of agreement of .87 on the eight practice samples. During rating of the actual excerpts three anonymous samples were included (near beginning, middle, and near end) in the random ordered excerpts in an attempt to determine consistency of rater agreement and the original criteria. The index of rater agreement on the three samples was 1.0.

Group Semantic Differential

Since the present study was concerned with self-perception, an outcome instrument which would be sensitive to such 'movement' in the small group experience was required. As an outcome measure of Self-Perception, Osgood (1957) suggested that "there is reason to believe that the Semantic Differential possesses the necessary sensitivity to change in attitude toward self (p. 221)."

The Semantic Differential developed by Osgood, Succi and Tannenbaum (1957) appeared most appropriate to meet the above mentioned requirement. In addition to sensitivity to 'movement' of the aforementioned variable, the instrument for assessing Self-Perception should meet the following criteria:

(1) The scale should show significant differences in an hypothesized direction over a given period of time.

(2) The derived measure from the scale should be some measure of distance between psychological states on two occasions.

(3) The scales should be relatively short and easily scoreable.

The Semantic Differential has been used in many studies, with modifications of the scales dictated by the particular purpose of the study under consideration (Osgood, 1957; Burke and Bennis, 1961).

Thus in the present study perception of 'self' was

assessed with Semantic Differential. The one measure sought after in this investigation is simply the location 'myself' against the co-ordinates of the differential.

Construction

Adaptability of the instrument to the present investigation was possible; as Osgood (1957) stated: "there are no standard concepts and no standard scales; rather, the concepts and scales used in the particular study depend upon the purposes of the research (p. 76)." The major criterion suggested for choosing concepts is 'good judgment' on the part of the researcher, even though sometimes the investigator may actually make a sampling analysis. In other words, "there is no general semantic differential test as such (Osgood, 1957, p. 76)."

Ease of modification of the Semantic Differential increased the appeal of the instrument for the present study. The instrument for assessment of Self-Perception is comprised of twenty-four, seven-point semantic differential rating scales on which each group member rates the concept; 'The Way I See Myself'. The scale is essentially a combination of controlled association and scaling procedures. In this study the group member is provided with a concept about 'the self' to differentiated and a set of bi-polar adjectival scales, against which to do it, his task being to indicate, for each item (pairing of a concept with a scale) direction of his association and its intensity on a

seven-point scale.

For example: good 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 bad

Each item is directional -- that is in terms of the theory of perception of self, each scale has a positive and negative pole. Every second item is in reverse order to reduce agreement-response set. The Group Semantic Differential (GSD), modified from Aiken (1965), consisted of scales representing each of Osgood's three factors: evaluative, potency, and activity (Appendix B). There is apparent value in increasing the number of scales; not only is a sampling analysis of scales possible but a more valid assessment of the construct seems possible. In underlining this advantage Osgood (1957) remarked that "in lengthening the number of scales, and the more representative the selection of these scales, the more validly does this point in the space represent the operation meaning of the concept (p. 26)." The present scale was modified from Aiken's (1965) and Burke and Bennis' (1961) scale, by increasing the number of scales to 24 from 10 and 20 respectively of the above mentioned scales. The major criteria for selection of additional items was 'relevance of the scale to the concept being judged'.

A primary objective of the investigator was an evaluation of the instrument used to measure change of self-perception. Through analysis of the instrument, the writer sought to determine whether the GSD provided a reliable

assessment of the attribute which was being examined.

Benne et al (1967) underscore the above mentioned objective of the study in reply to the question of instrumentation of HRT; by stressing that "instruments must be developed specifically for the social context under study (p. 340)."

Such an item analysis provides additional information about the value of the GSD as a research tool for use in the context in which it was employed. There is some indication that further development, evaluation, and refinement of the measuring technique with GSD as a self-percept scale be encouraged. Osgood (1957) suggested that "the factor analysis of the single concept 'myself', revealed a number of dimensions of self-evaluation, which could yield a useful personality test (p. 330)."

Scoring Procedures

Subjects' scores were determined by summing the individual scale weightings (one to seven) over the total of the twenty-four items, that is, maximum, $7 \times 24 = 168$; minimum score, $1 \times 24 = 24$.

TESTING PROCEDURES

Group Semantic Differential (Pre- Post-Test Measure)

Prior to the initial group session all subjects of the experimental and control groups were administered the GSD. The instructions were to complete the scale according to the concept 'The Way I See Myself'.

Post-testing was completed following the last group session (12 weeks). Administration procedures of the post-testing were identical to the pre-test situation.

Self-Exploration Sub-Scale (Session-by-Session Measure)

Session-by-session audio tape recordings were collected for each of the group sessions. One four-minute excerpt of verbal interaction was randomly selected from each session. The tape recorded excerpts were later transcribed into verbatim transcripts, code numbered, and randomly ordered for rater evaluation.

HYPOTHESES AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Hypothesis I

The difference between the pre- and post-test scores on the Group Semantic Differential will be significantly different for individuals in the three experimental Human Relations Training groups than for individuals in the non-

treatment group.

Analysis

A two-way analysis of variance with repeated measures was the proposed statistical test of significance between the pre- and post-test gain scores (Winer, 302, 241). In the event that the pretest means were not equal, an analysis of covariance would be applied as a leveling operation on the pretest scores.

Hypothesis II

The mean performance levels of self-exploration of the three Human Relations Training groups should show a non-linear trend over the sessions of the treatment period.

Analysis

Testing for the directionality of the level of self-exploration will be accomplished by a Test for Trend Analysis (Winer, 1965, p. 132).

CHAPTER IV

STATISTICAL TREATMENT AND RESULTS

The statistical procedures used, and the corresponding results, may be considered as falling into three categories:

- (1) Analysis of the effect of HRT upon Self-Perception.
- (2) Trend analysis of level of self-exploration of HRT groups over the first seven sessions.
- (3) Estimate of the reliability of the Group Semantic Differential (GSD).
- (4) Estimate of inter-rater reliability and per cent agreement among the raters.

EFFECT OF HRT UPON SELF-PERCEPTION

After group means on the GSD for the pre- and post-testing had been determined for the total sample, a two-way analysis of variance with repeated measures was applied to the group means, to determine whether any significant differences were obtained between the pre- and post-scores (see Table I).

When the group means of the GSD were tested for significance of the differences ($F=.396 < 1$) the 'A' main

TABLE I
PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST MEANS FOR SELF-PERCEPTION
OF THE FOUR GROUPS

	Pre-test Means	Post-test Means
Group 1	122.818	126.000
Group 2	128.333	127.889
Group 3	119.100	127.400
Group 4	126.789	129.000

effects (between groups) indicated that the post-test scores are not significantly different (see Table II). In other words, the HRT did not show effect at the .05 level.

TABLE II
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF POST-TEST MEANS

Source of Variance	SS	DF	MS	F	P
Between Groups	15905.00	48			
'A' Main Effects	480.85	3	136.28	0.396	0.76
Error	15486.00	45	344.13		

The 'B' main effects (within groups) shows a significant difference between the total pre-test and total post-test scores ($F=6.96 < 1$) at the .05 level (see Table III).

TABLE III
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE BETWEEN PRE-TEST AND
POST-TEST MEANS

Source of Variance	SS	DF	MS	F	P
Within Groups	2051.80	49			
'B' Main Effects	248.13	1	248.13	6.96	0.01139
Error	1604.00	45	55.64		

The summary of analysis of variance indicates there was not significant interaction effect of 'A' with 'B' at the .05 level (see Table IV).

TABLE IV
INTERACTION EFFECT OF 'A' WITH 'B'

Source of Variance	SS	DF	MS	F	P
'A' and 'B' Interaction	226.98	3	75.66	2.123	0.11058
Error	1604.00	45	35.64		

The hypothesized relationship between Self-Perception and HRT was further pursued by conducting a one-way analysis of covariance on the group data.

Analysis of covariance is a statistical control to remove potential sources of bias in the experiment as well

as increase precision (Winer, 1965, p. 578).

In the present analysis, measurement on the covariate (pre-test means) are made for the purpose of adjusting the measurements on the criterion (post-test means), therefore more precise information on the treatment effects (HRT) is obtained by adjusting the post-test means for the effects of the pre-test means.

The test for difference between adjusted means indicates no significant difference ($F=.1123 < 1$) among the groups at the .05 level (see Table V).

TABLE V
ADJUSTED ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST MEANS

Source	DF	MS	ADJF	P
Between Groups	3	067.27	01.123	0.350
Error	44	59.87		

As Table V shows, the major hypothesis of the study in which an effect of Human Relations Training on change in Self-Perception was not confirmed.

TEST FOR TREND OF GROUPS OVER SESSIONS

Session-by-session measures on the SE Sub-Scale are presented graphically of the experimental groups (see Figures 1, 2, and 3). In addition an average of the three rated scale values was determined and presented in graphical form (see Figures 1a, 2a, and 3a).

The reliability index indicating the consistency with which each of the raters assigned the same scale value in addition to ordering consistency = .95. The above coefficient is adjusted reliability for differences of the rater individual means.

Individual rater means are shown in Table VI.

TABLE VI
INDIVIDUAL RATER MEANS

Rater 1	Rater 2	Rater 3
X = 2.81	X = 2.61	X = 2.68

The relationship between the two variables of HRT and SE was pursued by means of a test for trend on the average of the three rater means over sessions one to seven of groups 1 and 2. It was not possible to test for trend with the third group due to missing information.

Stated differently the test for trend is to find the degree of best fitting polynomial describing the

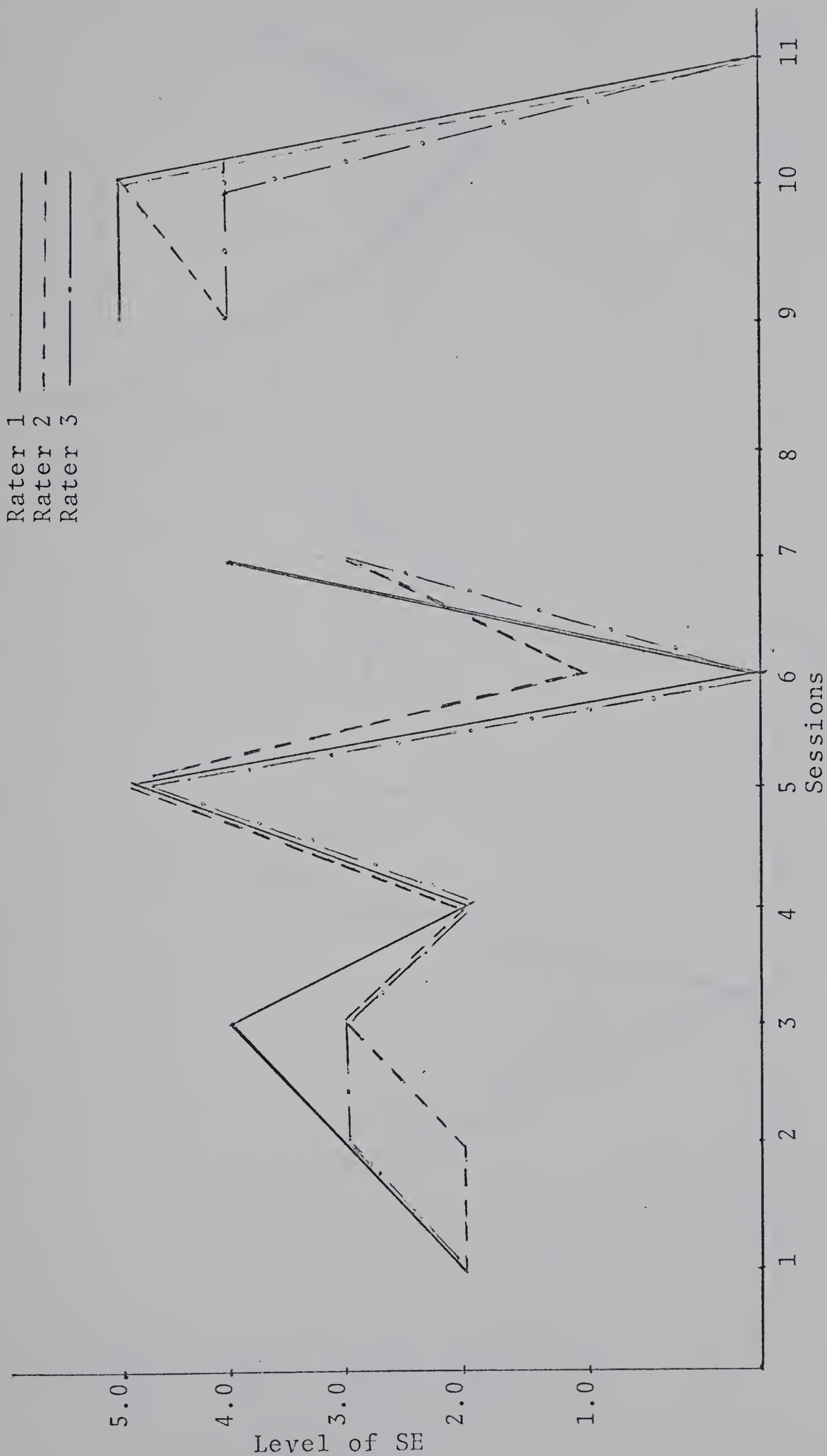


Figure 1
Self-Exploration Sub-Scale Ratings by
Three Judges of Group 'A'

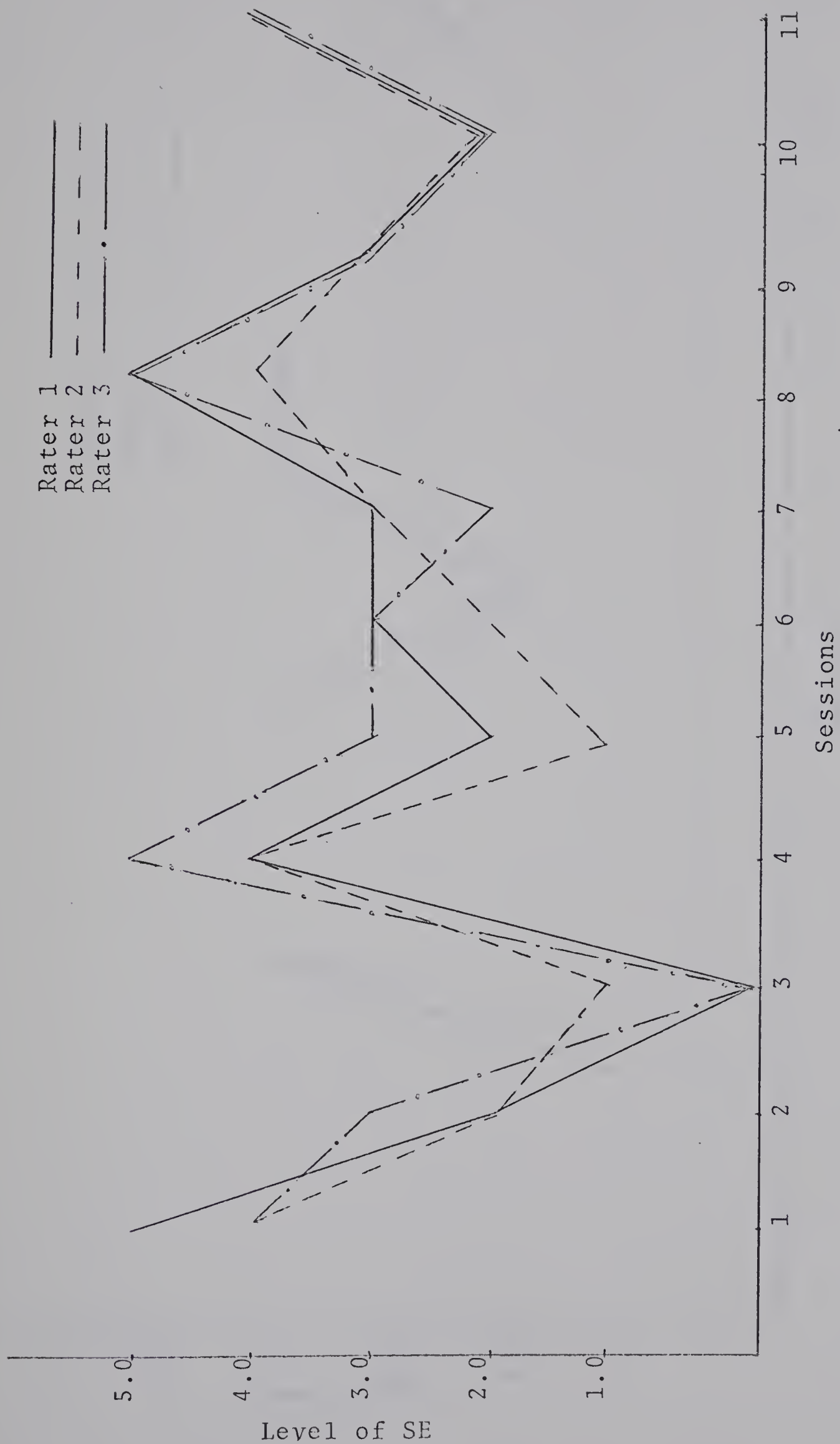


Figure 2
Self-Exploration Sub-Scale Ratings by
Three Judges of Group 'B'

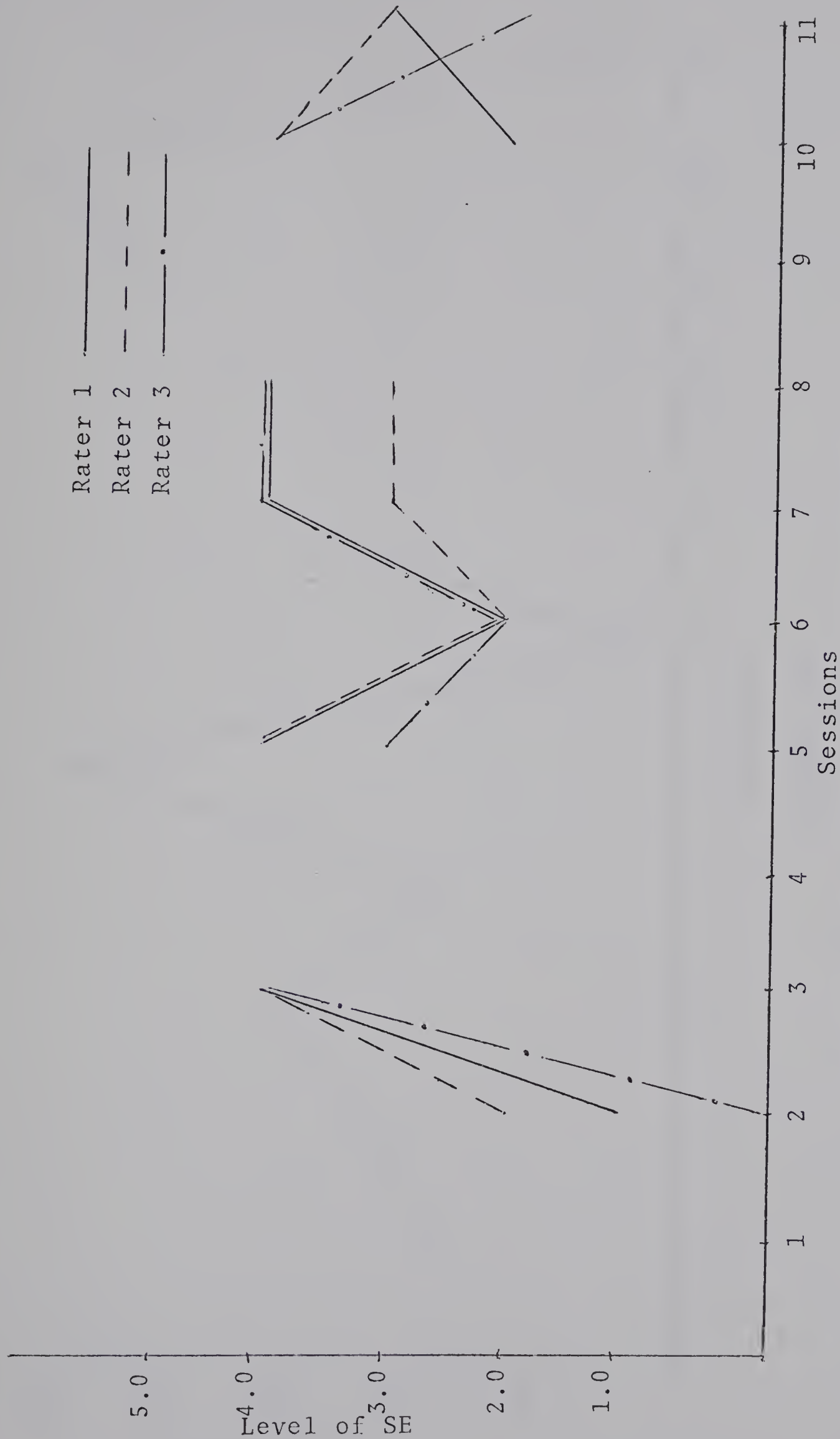


Figure 3
Self-Exploration Sub-Scale Ratings by
Three Judges of Group 'C'

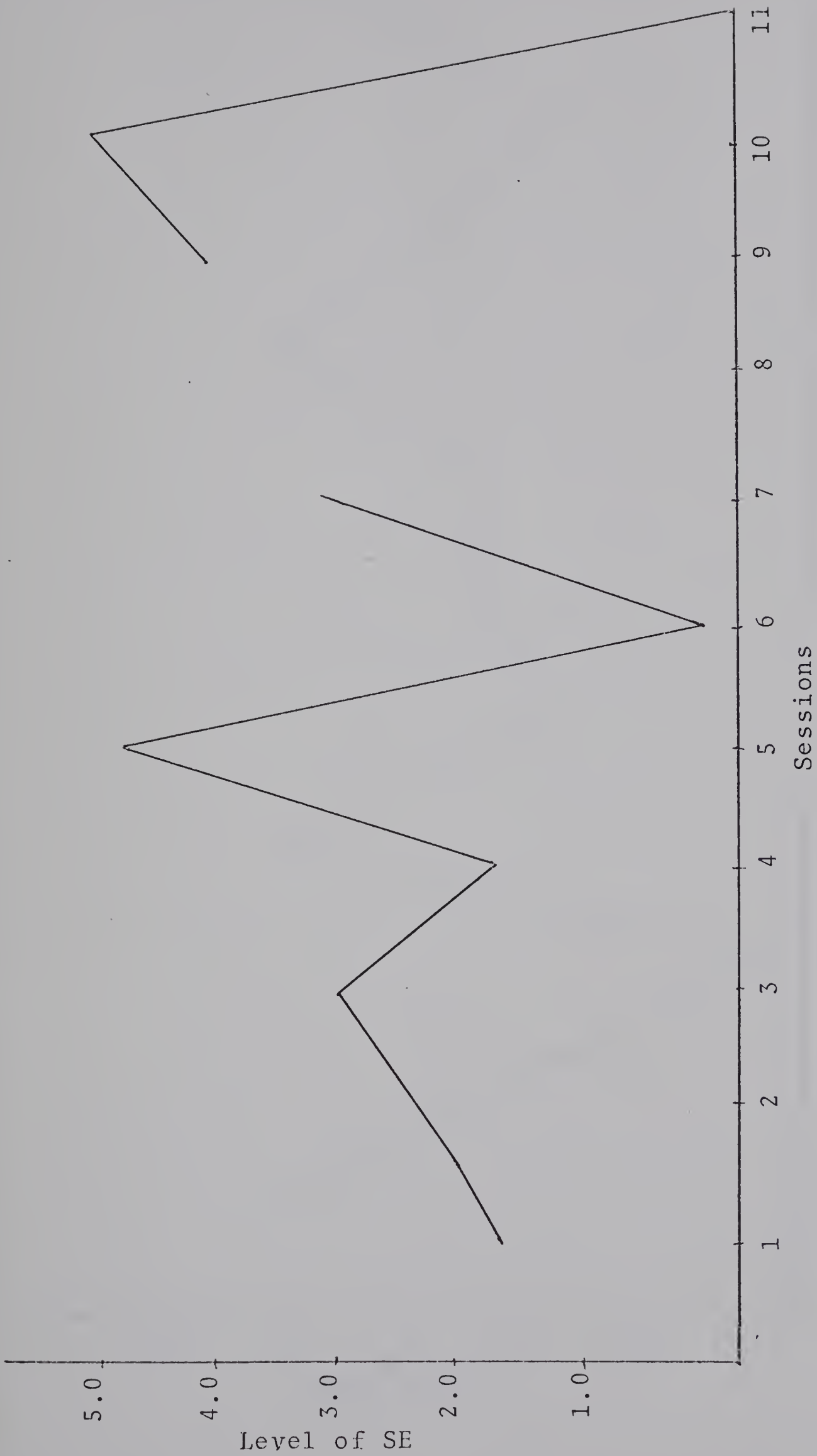


Figure 1a
Mean Self-Exploration Sub-Scale Ratings of
Judges of Group 'A'

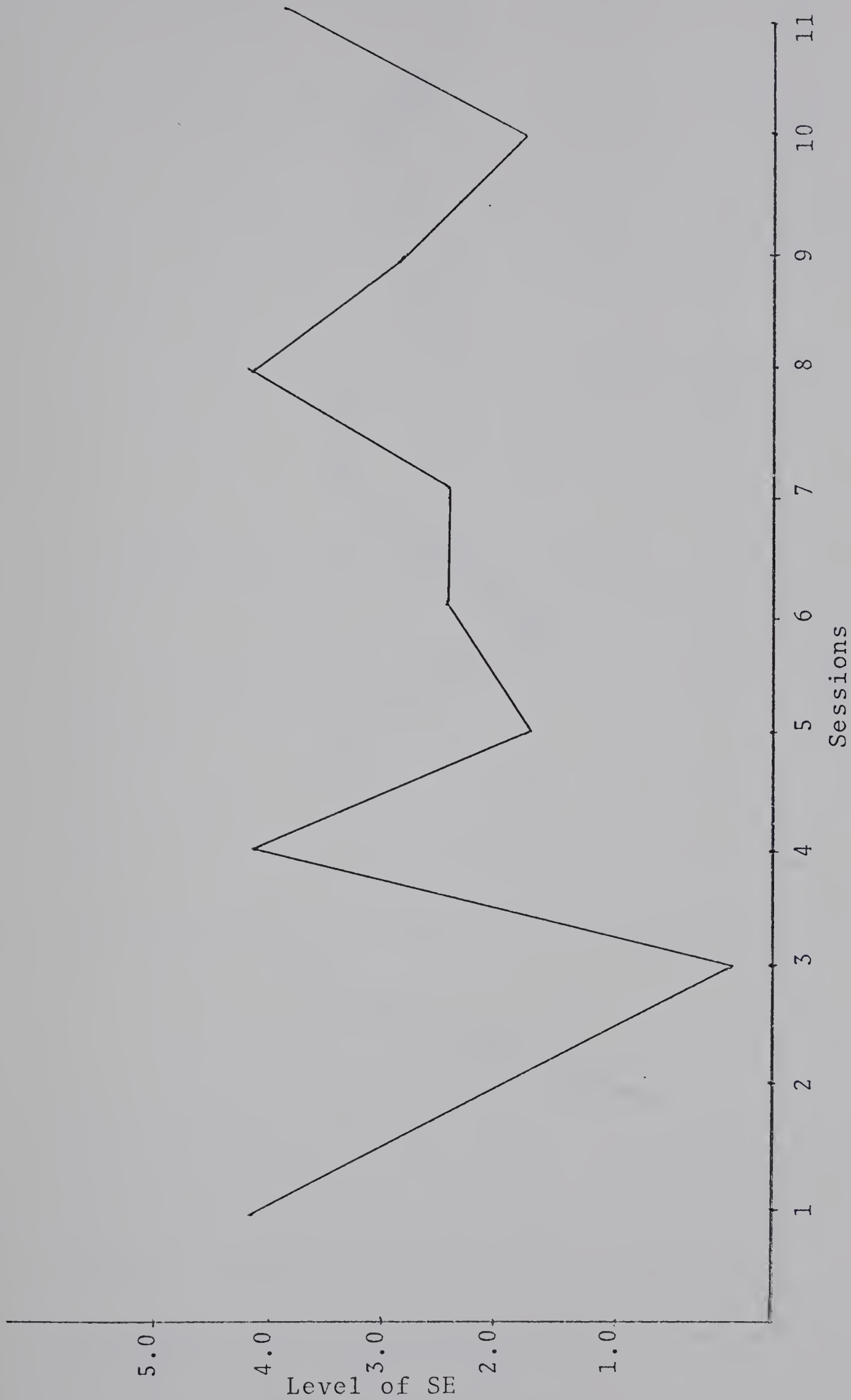


Figure 2a
Mean Self-Exploration Sub-Scale Ratings of
Judges of Group 'B'

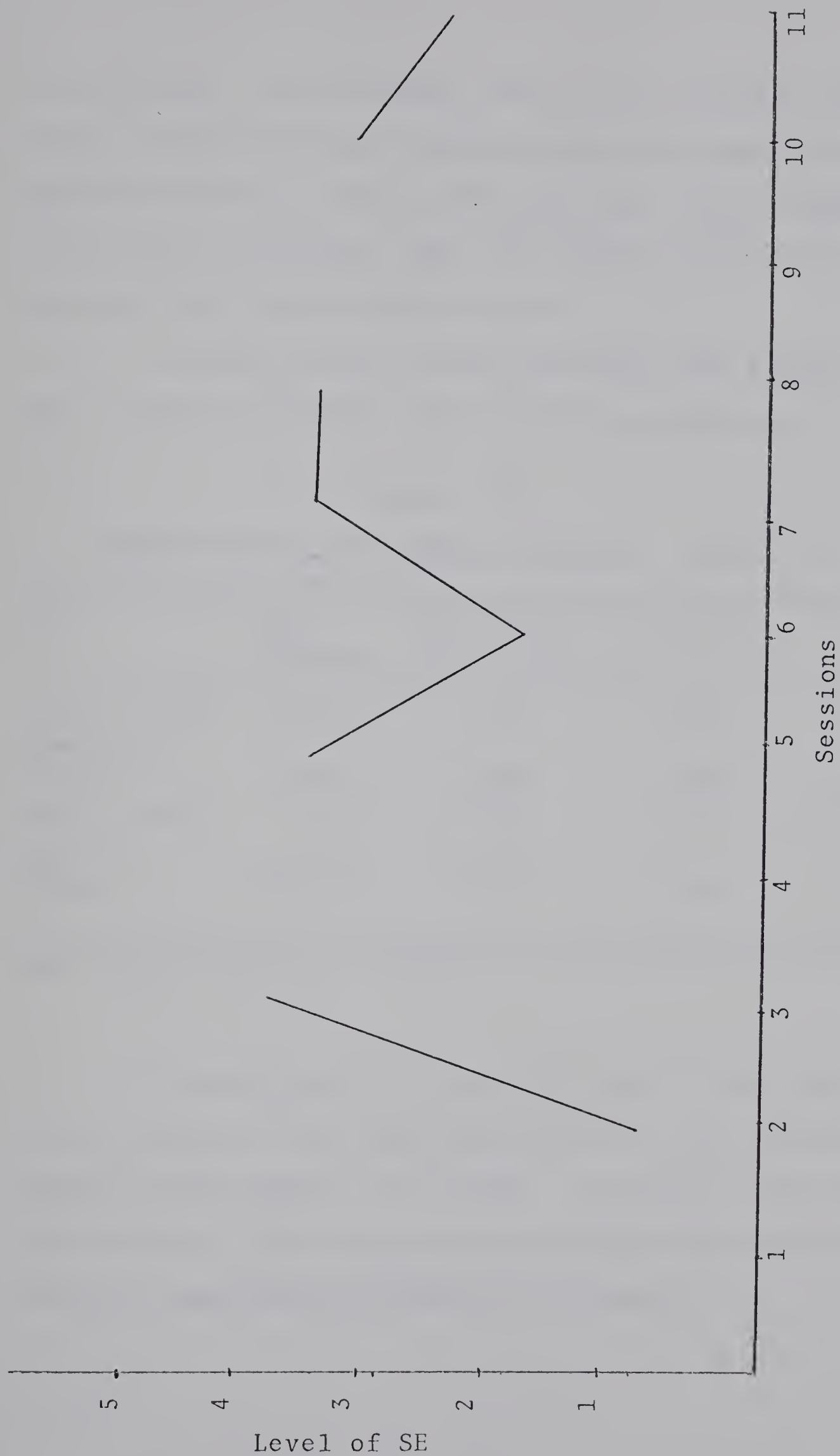


Figure 3a
Mean Self-Exploration Sub-Scale Ratings of
Judges of Group 'C'

relationship. Specifically the test for trend in this study, is developed for single-factor treatment having repeated measures (Winer, 1965, p. 132). For example, if the trend is linear, then the amount of SE would increase with successive sessions.

A summary of the overall analysis for groups 1 and 2 appears in Tables VII and VIII respectively.

TABLE VII

SUMMARY OF TEST FOR TREND ANALYSIS: GROUP 'A'

Test	Mean Squares	Calculated F	Critical F	P
Linear Trend	80.35	2.25	4.05	.05
Quadratic Trend	42.98	1.20	4.05	.05
Cubic Trend	0.00	0.00	4.05	.05
Quartic Trend	502.85	14.10	4.05	.05
Mean Square Residual = 35.64				

By inspection of F value for each of the tests for trend on group 1 and approximating the F distribution having (1.54) degrees of freedom. Looking at the critical value when $\alpha = .05$ is 4.024 one concludes the quartic trend is significant beyond the .05 level.

TABLE VIII

SUMMARY OF TEST FOR TREND ANALYSIS: GROUP 'B'

Test	Mean Squares	Calculated F	Critical F	P
Linear Trend	77.77	2.18	4.02	.05
Quadratic Trend	127.11	3.56	4.02	.05
Cubic Trend	253.33	7.10	4.02	.05
Quartic Trend	142.09	4.01	4.02	.05

Mean Square Residual = 35.64

By inspection of the F value for each of the tests for trend on group 2 and approximating the F distribution having (1.48) degrees of freedom. The critical value when $\alpha = .05$ is 4.048. The cubic trend is significant beyond the .05 level.

GSD RELIABILITY ESTIMATE

Test Consistency

The Cronbach Alpha coefficient of internal consistency was applied to the pre- and post-test scores on the GSD. The analysis was run in order to determine measure of item homogeneity and item-test correlations.

Table IX shows the respective coefficients.

TABLE IX

PRE- AND POST-TEST RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS FOR GSD

Pre-test Consistency	0.8955
Post-test Consistency	0.8872

The reliability coefficients are relatively high which indicates the items have high item correlation with each other and probably measures much the same attribute. Stated differently, the individual items tend to correlate highly with the total test scores for each subject.

RATER RELIABILITY ESTIMATES

The estimate of the reliability for the three judges was calculated by means of analysis of variance applied to the ratings made by each of the judges (Winer, 1965, pp. 105-132). The analysis of variance is summarized in Table X.

TABLE X
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE (UNADJUSTED DATA)

Source of Variance	SS	DF	MS
Between People	188.24	30	6.27
Within People	19.33	62	0.31
Judges	.60	2	0.31
Residual	18.73	60	0.31
Total	207.57	92	

The data was adjusted for differences between the rater means, in a way that within people is free of any source of variation which is a function of differences in frames of reference for the judges; that is following adjustment, there is no differences between the mean ratings given by each judge.

In terms of the adjusted analysis of variance, the reliability of the mean of three ratings = .95.

The above index ($r=.95$) was determined by the formulae:

$$r = \frac{MS_{bet} - MS_{res}}{MS_{bet}}$$

The estimate of the reliability of a single rating for adjusted data = .86.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between Human Relations Training (HRT) and Self-Perception (SP); and an investigation of group level of Self-Exploration over a number of sessions.

Recently, a number of studies reported that HRT leads to changes in perception of self. Burke and Bennis (1961) reflect the present interest in assessing changes of self, as a measure of HRT outcome, by indicating that:

... perceptual changes in members of groups are significant variables for study, not only owing to their intrinsic psychological interest, but also because they so often seem a necessary concomitant for more overt behavioral changes (p. 165).

The rationale suggesting a relationship between HRT and SP was summarized in Chapter II as follows:

Changes in perception of self are described as effective behavioral changes induced by learner involvement in HRT groups. Such learner involvement requires the establishment of a process of inquiry in which data about member behaviors are collected and analyzed simultaneously with experience which generates the behaviors. Learnings thus achieved are tested and generalized for continuing use. Past learnings are dynamically active in the present learning situation, and tend to shape the stimuli which the behavior of another person presents to the learner in such a way as to serve his self maintenance needs. Past

learnings also influence one's perception of others intentions and behaviors and tend to function as resistance to change. Thus the group trainers encourage members to reflect upon their resistance to influence and distortions of perceptions as a way to understand the needs, feelings, and values which characterize the self. Such perceptions of self are measured according to the Group Semantic Differential (GSD).

Truax's theory and investigation of 'self' change, appear to lend support to the hypothesis describing the relationship between self-perception and HRT as outlined by Benne et al (1967). Truax (1967) developed his theory of self-change upon extensive research studies in psychotherapy, in which he explains that changes in self-perception (self-concept) were a measurable outcome variable of psychotherapy groups as well as quasi-group therapy. Such outcome changes in self-description were related to levels of 'therapeutic ingredients' -- specifically, Self-Exploration. Truax maintains that provided the antecedent conditions of a helping relationship are manifest within the group, change in description of self, in a positive direction, will be a measurable outcome.

The above theoretical formulations describing the change in perception of self as an outcome of group training -- namely HRT -- are supported by a number of studies (Truax, 1967; Truax and Carkhuff, 1964; Truax and Wargo, 1966c; Berzon et al, 1965; Benne et al, 1967; Burke and Bennis, 1961; and Schein and Bennis, 1967).

For this study it was decided to choose 49 graduate

students (35 male and 14 female) specializing in the area of counseling psychology. The subjects were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups to analyze the effects of HRT upon Self-Perception of group members. A before and after test was applied. The Group Semantic Differential (GSD) (Osgood's Semantic Differential, 1957) was chosen to test changes of self perception brought about by HRT. In this study the subject is provided with the concept: 'The Way I See Myself' to be differentiated, and a set of twenty-four bipolar adjectival scales, against which to do it. The subject's self-perception was determined by the sum of individual scale weightings the total number of scales.

Another objective of the present study was the analysis of mean performance levels of Self-Exploration (SE) of the experimental groups over the sessions of the treatment period. Ratings of the above attribute were made on the Self-Exploration Sub-Scale (Berzon, 1965) by trained judges.

Comparing the experimental groups with the control group revealed no significant changes in self-perception mean scores among the groups. In other words, no significant relationship between self-perception and HRT was revealed in the present study.

Analyzing the trend of mean performance levels of SE of two of the three experimental groups revealed a non-

linear trend. In other words, evaluation of the process variable SE indicated that group level of SE does not increase proportionately with time of treatment (HRT).

An evaluation, to determine the value of the GSD to measure Self-Perception consistently was applied. Estimates of internal consistency suggest the GSD is a reliable measure of the attribute under investigation.

As part of the final analysis, rater reliability estimates were determined to provide information about the consistency of the judges' values assigned to the mean performance level of Self-Exploration of the HRT groups.

CONCLUSIONS

Hypothesis I. Human Relations Training (HRT) and Self-Perception

The difference between the pre- and post-test scores on the GSD for individuals in the HRT group will be significantly greater than for individuals in the non-treatment group.

The above hypothesis based on the rationale (Benne et al, 1967 and Truax, 1967) was not confirmed in this study; no significant relationship exists between HRT as defined by Benne et al (1967) and Self-Perception as measured by the GSD.

Hypothesis II. Self-Exploration (SE) and Human Relation
Training (HRT)

The mean performance levels of SE of the three HRT groups should show a non-linear trend over the sessions of the treatment period.

Experimental Group A. The above hypothesis was confirmed for Group A; that is, there was a significant quartic trend describing the level of SE over the first seven sessions of the treatment period.

Experimental Group B. The above hypothesis was confirmed for Group B; that is, there was a significant cubic trend describing the level of SE over the first seven sessions of the treatment period.

Experimental Group C. The above hypothesis was not able to be tested with the present group due to missing information.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

There were two major hypotheses upon which this study was based. In one instance the hypothesis was supported (level of SE would be non-linear in trend). In the other case the hypothesis was rejected (there is no relationship indicated between HRT and Self-Perception).

These findings raise some interesting questions for discussion. The remainder of this chapter deals with possible explanations for these findings and with implications for further research.

A limitation of the present study, which should be noted prior to further discussion of the results, involves the treatment process (HRT). Figure 1, page 42, indicates that no SE value was assigned to the number eight session of Group 'A'. The missing information was not a function of non-treatment; rather the recording of the session was not discernable, due to technical problems.

Figure 3, page 44 (Group 'C') also discloses information gaps. However the missing information indicated in Figure 3 was a result of session one and nine being cancelled. Session number four was held in a different setting and at a different time -- no recording of that session was possible.

Considering the above observations, it would appear that groups 'A' and 'B' received similar treatment -- in terms of length and number of sessions which Group 'C' did not. Thus the lack of control of the treatment process (HRT) for Group 'C' is a possible influence in the explanation of the results.

Discussion of Hypothesis I

Schein and Bennis (1965) have indicated that the non-residential laboratory (HRT that occurs as part of a larger

educational enterprise, meeting two or three times a week) in some ways are less effective in inducing behavioral changes than residential laboratories (members meet for HRT on an 'intensive' basis; sessions are arranged close together with small time intervals between). The above mentioned authors point out that "it is harder, but not impossible, to establish the appropriate climate necessary for effective laboratory training and meaningful learning in the non-residential setting (p. 74)."

A major goal of HRT, as indicated earlier in Chapter II, is induction of specific behavioral changes of the 'self' in members participating in the group experience. The outcome changes are measured by means of changes in self-perception, which according to Benne et al, (1967) are a function of specific learning processes within the group.

Interpretation of the results of the present study should take into account the effect of 'time' between sessions. Learning effectiveness by the group members is dependent upon the length of time of the interval between group sessions; that is, the competing responses of the time space between sessions may tend to have an extinguishing effect upon the earlier learnings about 'self'. Thus learned perceptions about self, induced through learning processes of the group in the present study, may not be measurable due to the length of the intersession interval

(one week).

There appears to be some support of the above explanation by investigation of other findings in HRT outcome. Several studies which show significant changes in self-perceptions of group members as an observable outcome of HRT, were designed as a 'continuous' or 'residential' training laboratory, that is, minimal time intervals between sessions (Burke and Bennis, 1961; Benne et al, 1967; Schein and Bennis, 1965; and Miles, 1964).

Conversely several studies of 'non-continuous' design have produced findings of no significant differences in changes of 'self' learning as a result of treatment (Kelman and Parloff, 1956; Wirt, Betz and Engle, 1967; and Bennis et al, 1957).

Although Burke and Bennis (1961) advanced an explanation for non-significance of outcome differences by Kelman and Parloff (1954) as being due to insensitive instruments and small population size, the writer observed that the laboratory design of the study under question required that the groups meet once a week (one-hour) over twenty sessions. It appears to the writer that such a design was reflected in the findings of the Kelman and Parloff study and is a possible factor effecting the findings of the present study.

The design of the present study suggests a limitation with regard to non-significant gains in self-percept, in

that provision for a follow-up assessment of the dependent variable (self-percept) would have strengthened the design. Gazda and Ohlsen (1961) demonstrated the value of such a design, in assessment of outcome change, by conducting a study with prospective counselors involved in group training. The findings indicated non-significant increase in self-concept scores between pre- and post-testing; however, a six-month follow-up assessment revealed that the mean difference scores for the stability of self-concept variable increased significantly for the experimental group over the pre-test.

The limitation of the present design suggests implications for future research by providing for a follow-up assessment which would further research by providing for a follow-up assessment which would further investigate the time variable as it affects outcome through the "latency phenomenon" suggested by Gazda and Ohlsen (1961). Directly relevant to the latency phenomenon, is a series of studies by Hovland et al, (1949) reported in Lakin and Carson (1966) on the "sleeper effect" which indicates that while memory of factual material may show a decrease with time, changes of attitude (self-percept) may actually increase.

While it is clear that such a process cannot, at this stage of research, be viewed as definitely applicable to the question of long range effects of HRT, it is conceivably a factor of considerable importance for further

research.

In addition to time interval between sessions, length of sessions as well as number of sessions may be factors influencing findings of outcome measures of the 'self'. In respect to number of sessions, Schein and Bennis (1967) observe that non-residential designs require more sessions to accomplish the same outcomes as the shorter residential designs.

Another possible interpretation of the results of the present study is that 'setting' affected amount of 'self' learning. Schein and Bennis, (1965) have indicated that situational influences of the setting are greater in HRT courses designed within the academic or business situation, than is the case in 'residential' laboratories. In the present study the subjects may have been restricted somewhat -- in terms of member involvement -- by the 'image' or 'role' of the 'graduate student'. In addition the HRT course had an evaluation grade to be assigned at the end of the laboratory training. The group leaders, a variable worth notice, also may have directly affected the amount of perceptual exploration of self occurring within the group, in that the trainers of the present study were academic staff members with whom the subjects had established teacher-student relationships. In a study by Harrow et al, (1967), the investigators explored the relationship between group trainers and the emotional climate for group meeting. The

findings suggest that the group leaders tended to influence the group climate -- specifically, level of member constraint. The study suggests implications for further investigation of the model set by the group leader in accounting for the members' emotional behavior as well as outcome. The trainer and setting variables may have counteracted attempts to measure changes in self-perception when one considers that subjects, according to Jourard and Lasakow (1958), will describe their attitudes and opinions much more openly than they otherwise will, when the things described do not relate directly to the subjects' own perception of their personality (p. 39).

Schein and Bennis (1967) concur with Jourard and Lasakow (1958) with respect to changes in perception of self, as they explain that members are less likely to analyze, explore, and experiment with ways of behaving in an environment which is influenced by impinging pressures not unlike those mentioned above.

Possible distortion of valid outcome measures of self-ratings may be reflected in the findings of the present study as Wiley (1950) cautions that a "subject may try to present himself as having attitudes and perceptions other than those actually true of himself and that he may not be willing to reveal certain information about himself (p. 39)."

Another variable to be considered in view of the findings relates to the subjects themselves. Truax (1967)

states that an important factor in considering self-change as an outcome of HRT is associated with the characteristics of the subjects. He (Truax) stresses that amount of learning about perceptions of self is directly limited by the personality of the graduate student. As Truax (1967) and Benne et al, (1967) explain, the member must involve himself, often at the feeling and affective as well as cognitive level. Changes in perception of self would be less probable for graduate students than other possible populations as Truax (1967) explains that "graduate students seem particularly unskilled in handling human emotion -- both their own and the emotion of others (p. 277)." The inability to cope with human emotion is derived from the highly intellectual nature of graduate training programs and from the selection process of graduate school (Truax, 1967).

A final consideration which may have counteracted attempts to validly measure changes in Self-Perception for the experimental and control groups, is related to individual subject changes. It is conceivable that the interaction effect between group members and trainer resulted in mixed changes; that is, some members' self-perception changed in a positive direction, some remained stable, and some self-perceptions moved in a negative direction. The results may have tended to cancel each other, and the subsequent comparison with controls showed no significant differences.

Discussion of Hypothesis II

The findings regarding the minor hypothesis indicate that mean performance level of group SE is non-linear in trend as hypothesized and appears to support previous theory and research on the nature of change in group of SE as individuals meet over time in HRT groups. Although missing information in the third group prevented test for trend, by extrapolation it would appear to also be non-linear in trend. Thus it appears, in terms of Wallen's explanation of group development, that during sessions, level of risk taking of personally relevant material increases until the level becomes too high, the 'ceiling effect' is reached, with the result being -- reduction of level of SE behavior. Reduction of level of SE is followed by a decrease in trust level of the group which in turn has a lowering effect on level of accurate interpersonal communication of group members.

The results of the present study -- trend of SE over sessions -- is consistent with earlier findings of level of SE over group sessions (Solomon et al, 1965; and Berzon, 1965).

Truax (1969), upon inspection of session-by-session level of SE for the three experimental groups of the present study, indicated that such trend (non-linear) is characteristic of HRT groups and may be explained by the 'catharsis'

effect.² The 'catharsis effect' refers to an emotional discharge by a group member(s) which has the effect of reducing level of personal involvement in the group for a period of time following the point of high personal interaction or involvement. Carkhuff and Berensson (1967), observe that such 'catharsis' is a prerequisite to increased self-understanding by group participants.

Implications for Further Research

The findings shown in the present study, with regard to Self-Perception and SE as related to HRT, present interesting possibilities for future research.

On the basis of the research and rationale reviewed in the preceding paragraphs, it would be of interest to design a HRT laboratory, of the residential description, with graduate students in order to empirically determine whether HRT leads to significant changes of Self-Perception as previous theory and research have suggested (Burke and Bennis, 1961; Benne et al, 1967; and Miles, 1964). A comparison of the findings of such a proposed design, with those of 'self-change' outcomes of non-residential laboratories may provide some valuable information with direct implications for future designs of HRT programs with various objectives and goals taken into consideration; that is, HRT within the

²C.B. Truax, personal communication, June 3, 1969.

educational setting.

Research of HRT requires that the researcher be aware of many variables. As Schein and Bennis (1965) contend; there are many difficulties in doing valid evaluation research with HRT groups.

In addition to decreasing the length of time intervals between sessions, several other variables would need to be observed by the researcher to maintain empirical rigor. The training design should remain constant, the control group must be randomly assigned and a standard testing situation need be established for valid and reliable data collection.

More specifically, alterations in the basic design (Stanley and Campbell, 1965) must now be undertaken if answers to outcome changes of HRT are to be forthcoming. It will be necessary to subject the conclusions of 'longer sessions', 'more sessions' and 'decreased time intervals' between sessions, to further analysis of research. For example, parallel groups running concurrently should be stopped at various times (for example, 14 sessions, 28 sessions and 42 sessions). In addition various intensities of treatments need to be tried (for example, parallel groups receiving one-hour group sessions, one and one-half hour sessions and two-hour sessions). Also varying lengths of time between sessions is a necessary investigation (for example, parallel groups with intersessions time intervals

of one-half day, one day, three days and one week).

Future research might also consider the influence of setting, and situational pressures impinging upon the group activity, learning processes and outcome changes.

Instrumentation of process and outcome variables require that various measures of self-change need to be investigated to ascertain the validity of the instrument being used in research of HRT groups. Construct validity is perhaps most important in this context (Cronbach and Meehl in Jackson, 1955), as research must determine the extent to which tests of self can be interpreted as a measure of that attribute which is not operationally defined.

A finding of considerable interest in the present study was mean level of SE over time as a function of the hypothesized relationship between level of SE and levels of accurate empathy, unconditional positive regard and self-congruence (Truax, 1966a,b). In future research it would be of value to investigate the relationship between SE and perception or attitude change toward self as a function of HRT.

The findings would be meaningful in terms of previous research and theory in the area of group psychotherapy in which SE has been shown to be a significant variable in personality change (Truax and Wargo, 1966; Wagstaff, Rice, and Butler, 1960).

The finding of the level of SE over sessions may have heuristic value in terms of future study of process variables. Until recently the process variables of HRT have been ignored in favor of investigating variables which are held as measures of outcome. It is necessary to determine what processes are instrumental in bringing about outcome changes within the individual.

A final implication from the present study relates to the instrument employed to measure change in self-perception of group members. In terms of reliability of the GSD of the present investigation, the test appears to be a satisfactory measure of the desired attribute. Support for use of the GSD was provided by Burke and Bennis (1961) who reported that a modified form of GSD, as found by Osgood, in a variety of individual settings (Osgood, 1957) corresponded quite closely to the way in which the group members were perceived in the group.

Although the present study, and the work of Burke and Bennis (1961) suggest the GSD is a relatively precise measure of 'self', the present findings may reflect some of the basic weaknesses of available instruments for measuring HRT processes and outcome. It should be noted that most instruments of the type described above are what Campbell (1957) has termed 'reactive' in nature, so that subject sensitization and/or test-treatment interaction are quite likely (cited in Miles, 1964).

There remains considerable research to be done with the semantic differential as a self-measure for use with groups. It would be useful to construct and test a form of the GSD with many more scales than the 24 chosen for this study, drawn from a wider variety of sources, to assess more exhaustively the various dimensions along which group members are perceived. It is reasonable to assume that perceptual dimensions would not change substantively during HRT, especially considering the correspondence between these factors and those found by other investigators using populations not exposed to a change experience; it will be necessary, however, to test this assumption (Burke and Bennis, 1961).

This study has attempted to show some of the changes which occur in the perception of group members as they meet over time in Human Relations Training groups; it has also demonstrated the level of Self-Exploration of groups over sessions of the treatment period. Subsequent research efforts will necessitate greater experimental control to indicate more directly the causes of these various changes, and to discriminate between the nature and degree of change, as well as to emphasize refinement and evaluation of instruments used to measure such changes.

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A P P E N D I C E S

A P P E N D I X A

A SCALE FOR THE EVALUATION OF
SELF-EXPLORATION IN SMALL GROUPS

(SE SUB-SCALE)

Betty Berzon
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La Jolla, California

1965

WHAT THE SCALE IS

Self-Exploration Sub-Scale (SE). Self-exploration is assessed by the amount of "personally relevant" material being discussed and by the way in which it is being discussed. The SE Sub-Scale describes six stages of self-exploration, ranging from "0" (no demonstrable self-exploration) to "5" (a very high degree of self-probing and exploration).

Personally relevant material, in other words, refers to self-expression which elaborates and deepens the image of the individual impersonally discusses subject matter external to himself and the group.

Notice that at Stage "0" there is a complete absence of personally relevant material introduced. In stages "1" through "5" personally relevant material is introduced, but it differs in quality from stage to stage.

SE Sub-Scale

Stage 0. Group discussion proceeds in a casual, conversational manner about generalized subject matter. Personally relevant material is not introduced. While such discussion may represent group members "warming up" or preparing the ground for self-exploration or even possibly "resting" after a period of deep level work, individuals are not at this time dealing with personally relevant

material, and the interaction should therefore be assigned a "0" rating.

Stage 1. Individuals initiate personally relevant material, but they do so in an aloof, superficial manner (as evidenced by voice, gestures, etc.). They present 'facts' about public aspects of themselves. There is no inwardly referring to feelings and reactions.

Problems may be spoken of, but they are not recognized as such. Even though an individual may be talking about himself, the tenor of his presentation is that of cocktail party small talk -- a way of passing the time.

Stage 2. Personally relevant material is initiated and discussed in an objective, intellectualized, mechanical manner.

There is inward reference for material, but discussion is without elaboration or movement toward further exploring the significance or meaning of the material or toward uncovering related feelings or material.

The individual speaks of problems as such, however, he sounds as if he has worked this material over frequently in his mind -- as if he were rehearsing a role, "playing the patient", perhaps.

Stage 3. Individuals discuss personally relevant material with involvement in what they are saying, rather than with the aloof superficiality of Stage 1, or the

rehearsed emotional remoteness of Stage 2.

Feelings and responses are a function of inward reference. They may be acted upon, but there is no effort made to explore related feelings and meanings. There is, however, clear indication that the individuals speaking are concerned about themselves and would like to broaden or deepen their self-knowledge. If the individual talks of problems, he speaks of his reaction to them also.

Stage 4. There is a tentative probing toward self-exploration. Presentation of personally relevant material is made with spontaneity and feeling, and there is an inward probing for discovery of new feelings which the individual struggles to reach and hold onto. It may be clear that the value of self-exploration is recognized, but it must also be clear that the group member is trying to actively explore himself and his world, even though at the moment he is doing so perhaps fearfully and tentatively.

There is a disturbing recognition that an inner referent exists, and attention may be focused on it, though it is seen as vague and global. "I'm all mixed up inside." When problems are discussed, it is with a questioning of the individual's own contribution to them.

Stage 5. Group members are actively exploring their feelings, their values, their perceptions of others, their

relationships, their fears, their turmoil, and their life-choices: and they are doing so with emotional proximity to the material.

Problems are seen as existing within the individual and he talks about them with an intensity of feeling. Individuals follow a connected chain of thoughts in focusing upon themselves.

A P P E N D I X B

GROUP SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL

The purpose of this task is to measure how you perceive or see certain people. You are asked to describe this person by checking where you feel he or she fits on each of the 24 scales.

Each scale has 7 points.

- If you circle number 1 or 7 this means that you feel the person you are describing is very much like the first or last word.
- If you circle number 2 or 6 this means that you feel the person you are describing is somewhat like the first or last word.
- If you circle number 3 or 5 this means that you feel the person you are describing is slightly like the first or last word.
- If you circle number 4 this means that neither of the words describes this person, or that both words describe him equally well, or that both words seem unimportant or irrelevant for this person.

As an example, the following 5 scales would mean that John Doe has been described as: extremely fair; somewhat lenient; both calm and excitable; slightly dangerous; and neither foolish nor wise.

1.	fair	①	2	3	4	5	6	7	unfair
2.	Severe	1	2	3	4	5	⑥	7	lenient
3.	calm	1	2	3	④	5	6	7	excitable
4.	dangerous	1	2	③	4	5	6	7	safe
5.	foolish	1	2	3	④	5	6	7	wise

Work at a fairly high speed as you describe each person. Do not puzzle over individual items. Make each item a separate and independent judgement. It is your first impression, your immediate feelings that we want. On the other hand, please do not be careless.

My name is _____.

The following is a description of the way I see Myself .

1.	insensitive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	sensitive
2.	strong	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	weak
3.	silent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	talkative
4.	dishonest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	honest
5.	excluded	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	included
6.	tough	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	fragile
7.	important	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unimportant
8.	sad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	happy
9.	follows	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	leads
10.	hot	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	cold
11.	involved	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	withdrawn
12.	shallow	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	deep
13.	discordant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	harmonious
14.	pleasant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unpleasant
15.	friendly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unfriendly
16.	passive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	active
17.	central	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	peripheral
18.	valuable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	worthless
19.	dependent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	independent
20.	slow	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	fast
21.	adaptable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	rigid
22.	distant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	close
23.	accepted	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	rejected
24.	bad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	good

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